

REMARKS

Claims 1-22 are present in this application. Claims 1, 8, 17 and 22 are independent. Claim 22 is new.

Claim Rejection

Claims 1-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Application Publication 2005/0182649 (Parulski) in view of U.S. Application Publication 2005/0210413 (Quek). Applicant traverses this rejection.

It is noted that the filing date of Quek of March 22, 2005 is after the date of the present application of January 22, 2002. Quek is a continuation-in-part of application No. 09/450,804, and consequently only obtains an earlier date for subject matter disclosed in the parent application.

Claims 1, 8, and 17

Claim 8 is directed to embodiments for an order accepting apparatus (e.g., Figs. 1 and 3: an order accepting terminal apparatus 16A) comprising a display panel (e.g., display panel 37) for indicating a menu image (e.g., order placing menu image 51) for inputting ordering information to specify an order placed for a service provided by an associate (e.g., Associate A), an input unit for inputting an input signal according to the menu image (e.g., mouse 46, keyboard 44, pointer 52), and a controller for determining said ordering information in response to the input signal (e.g., CPU 36).

The menu image (see Fig. 4) includes plural regions for setting plural items included in the ordering information, the plural regions including a service selecting region (e.g., service selecting region 56) for selecting one of plural services different from one another, a common item specifying region (e.g., common item specifying region 58) for specifying a common item common between the services, and a conditioning item setting region (e.g., conditioning item setting region 57) for setting a conditioning item settable according to the selected service. The order accepting apparatus is such that upon selection of the different service, the common item remains specified while the menu image is changed from displaying one service to a different service.

An advantage of the present order accepting apparatus is that the user can apply the same common item to two or more types of services. The present apparatus eliminates the time and work that would be required to read and retrieve common items at a plurality of times for the plurality of requested services.

The Office Action alleges that a menu provided by a service provider (paragraph 0007) of Parulski teaches the claimed "menu image." The Office Action alleges that a menu of photo products that are available for customization and purchase, provided by a fulfillment center 40 (para. 0049; block 106 in Fig. 2) teaches the claimed "service selecting region". The Office Action alleges that the menu of customizable features for the type of product selected provided by a network server 42 teaches the claimed "conditioning item setting region" (para. 0050; block 110 in Fig. 2).

The Office Action states that Parulski does not expressly disclose a menu image comprising plural regions for setting plural items included in the ordering information, the plural regions "including at least a common item specifying region for specifying a common item between said services." The Office Action instead relies on Quek for teaching a menu image comprising plural regions including "at least a common item specifying region for specifying a common item between the services." The Office Action refers to Fig. 2C of Quek.

Applicant submits that the claimed invention is not directed to plural regions including at least a common item specifying region. Rather, the claimed invention requires a menu image, or the like, including plural regions, the plural regions including "a service selecting region," "a common item specifying region," and "a conditioning item setting region."

Applicant submits that Parulski and Quek, either alone or in combination, fail to show a menu image including plural regions, the plurality regions including "a service selecting region," "a common item specifying region" and "a conditioning item setting region," as required by the claims. In paragraph 0050, Parulski states that, "in block 110, the network server 42 provides a menu of customizable features for the type of product selected by the user. In the previous paragraph 0049, Parulski states that, "in block 106, the fulfillment center 40 provides the customer with a menu of photo products 66 that are available for customization and purchase." Thus, it is evident that the menu at block 106 is served by the fulfillment center before the menu at block 110 that is

served by the network server. Parulski's method is set up to store a customer product type and features in a user account (step 114) in order to ensure consistent products for each group of digital images (step 116, step 134). The present invention, on the other hand provides a menu image that enables a user to choose other/multiple services for the same common item.

Quek also does not teach the claimed menu image including plural regions, the plural regions including a "service selecting region," "common item specifying region" and a "conditioning item setting region," as required by the claims. In particular, Quek assumes a predetermined service. For example, Figure 2c of Quek shows a menu for selecting images and selecting conditioning items for each selected image for a print service.

Applicant submits that similar to the prior art disclosed in the present application, Both Parulski and Quek would result in a different menu image for each of a plurality of services, and a requirement to retrieve images each time a service is changed to a different service.

In order to clarify this distinction, claims 1, 8, and 17 have been amended to explicitly recite the feature that the common item remains specified while the menu image is changed from displaying one service to a different service upon selection of the different service.

Applicant submits that Parulski and Quek fail to teach or suggest at least the claimed menu image including a plural regions, the plural items including a service

selecting region, a common item specifying region and a conditioning item setting region, and wherein the common item remains specified while the interface image is changed from displaying one service to a different service upon selection of the different service, as recited in the present claims.

Claim 2

Further with respect to claim 2, the Office Action alleges that album label printer 60, album pages 56, hardcopy prints 58, frames 68, and shipping container 64 constitute the claimed plural associates for providing plural services. Applicant disagrees. The various printing options, e.g., album pages or hard copy prints, constitute photo products of the fulfillment center 40. Thus, the various printing options constitute a plurality of services provided by a single associate. The claim requires a plurality of services and a plurality of associates. Applicant submits that Parulski fails to teach at least the feature of claim 2.

Applicant request that the rejection be reconsidered and withdrawn.

New Claim

New claim 22 explicitly recites a group of services displayed in a list of services in the service selecting region of the order placing image. Applicant submits that Parulski and Quek fail to teach each and every element of new claim 22.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendment, Applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Robert W. Downs (Reg. No. 48,222) at the telephone number of (703) 205-8000, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

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